



SAFETY AWARD—The picture to the right shows the presentation of the National Safety Council safety plaque by Major R.A. Wheeler, District Engineer, to Master J.F. Sulter of the Steamer ELLEN and his crew. The award was made for having earned the best safety record of all dredges and towboats in the District for the 1934 season.

From L to R: Major R.A. Wheeler, District Engineer, Master John F. Sulter, Captain, George W. Lavery, George W. Kensinger, Jr., Karl Seeber, Alvern Kensinger, Alfred A. Drechsler, Benjamin H. Shaw, Fred S. Wasson, Leonard Brewer, Elmer H. Hofeldt and Daniel W. Shaw.

U.S. ARMY CORP

ELLEN

Sternwheel towboat wood hull/steel hull 1907-1944. Built in La Crosse, Wisconsin, 145.5' x 26' x 4.4'. Engines 14'-6" ft. stroke. Original owner was Sawyer Austin Lumber Co. of La Crosse which at the time also owned GALLARDO and SCOTIA. W.W. Cargill of this firm used her as a part-time rafter and also for pleasure. the ELLEN was named for Mrs. W.W. Cargill. Captain Charles White Sr. was master of ELLEN in the early days and was an invited guest aboard OTTUMWA BELLE when she handled the last raft in 1915. Austen Cargill was bitten by a rattlesnake near Trempealeau, Wisconsin while ashore from the ELLEN and Captain White cauterized the wound with a heated sluice bar. Bought by USE, Rock Island, Illinois, who put a steel hull under her about 1930.

SUITER and FRIENDS RIVER HISTORY

Captain John F. Suiter was master of the ELLEN in the 1930's. Captain Suiter, the third Suiter to become a steamboat pilot, lived in Princeton along River Drive and raised his family there. He was the grandson of Phil Suiter who came to Le Claire in 1835. Phil learned how to navigate the Le Claire rapids from the Indians and assisted Robert E. Lee in surveying the Mississippi Rapids between Le Claire and Davenport in 1837. Phil became the first licensed pilot in the area and had the first recorded deed to land in Scott County. Some of Captain Suiter's grandchildren and great grandchildren still live in Princeton. RIGHT: ELLEN at dedication of the Mark Twain bridge, Hannibal, MO, 1933.



ELLEN--Continued

Captain Joseph M. Hawthorne of Le Claire, IA, was a guest aboard this boat several times in 1935 and 1936. He was a cousin of Nathaniel Hawthorne, the author, and long was an upper Mississippi River pilot. Born in Erie County, PA, and had been in La Crosse since 1856.

Boat was sold at public sale to Ralph M. James in 1943. His daughter, Mary Margaret Wood, traveled the world during WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War with her husband, a West Point graduate, Retired Colonel William E. Wood. They reside in Davenport. Their son is a Brigadier General in the U.S. Army and led a division of howitzers in the Gulf War. Another son was a helicopter pilot in the Vietnam War and survived being shot down six times. LEFT: ELLEN at lock 15, Rock Island, IL.

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